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# VEGETABLES



FLORIDA  
AGRICULTURE

SPRING ACREAGE (April, May, June, July)

April 10, 2000

## FLORIDA

**WEATHER:** Mostly dry and warm conditions during January, February, and March provided nearly ideal conditions for vegetable growth and development but increased the need for irrigation. Some cold temperatures and frost occurred in January causing some sweet corn acreage in the Everglades to be replanted. Otherwise, no significant weather problems occurred during the winter months.

This report reflects conditions as of April 1 and represents acreage for harvest during the spring months of April, May, June, and July. Estimated acreage for harvest by growing areas is presented in order: area, previous year (1999), current year (2000).

**SNAP BEANS:** The snap bean crop enters the harvest season in mostly fair to good condition. There were no freezes this winter to damage the crop. Planting is virtually complete. Harvest is active with good quality available. Yields are mostly good. (Southeast 5,000, 6,200; Southwest and Everglades, 4,100, 4,200; other areas, 4,900, 5,100; all areas, 14,000, 15,500)

**CABBAGE:** The cabbage crop is all planted. Harvest is active in the central and northern areas. Cabbage harvest is winding down in the southern areas. The crop is in fair to good condition. Growth and development are normal. Head size and quality are good. (All areas, 1,600, 1,000)

**SWEET CORN:** Growers in the Everglades region started spring crop planting during the last half of December. Producers in Dade County completed planting in early January with winter crop picking starting about mid-month. East Coast growers finished winter crop planting by early January as oldest acreage started to tassel. In late January a cold front passing over the Peninsula caused temperatures to dip to freezing levels in many areas with Dade County reporting frost during the early morning hours of January 27. The cold temperatures caused leaf burn in the East Coast region, and severely damaged a portion of the west side of some of the oldest fields in the Everglades area. Spring crop planting started in the Southwest at the end of January as fall crop harvesting ended. Nearly ideal conditions during February and March allowed most plants to recover from the cold with plant growth and ear development progressing very well. Harvesting began in the East Coast area about mid-February as growers around Zellwood started planting. Southwestern producers finished planting about mid-March. Everglades growers started harvesting during late March as East Coast growers finished picking. (Everglades, 21,500, 22,800; Central, 2,750, 2,600; North, 2,550, 2,400; other, 1,300, 1,000; all areas, 28,100, 28,800)

**CUCUMBERS:** The cucumber crop is in fair to good condition. There was no freeze this winter to damage the crop. Planting is winding down. Growth and development are normal. Harvest is active in the southern areas. Fruit is of good quality, size, and color. (North, 400, 400; Central, 1,900, 2,300; Southwest, 1,100, 1,100; Southeast, 1,900, 1,500; all areas, 5,300, 5,300)

**EGGPLANT:** Plant growth and development have been good to very good in most areas. There have been no major weather problems this year. Cutting of regular and Italian types is currently underway with good color, quality, and yield. Harvest will continue into June. (All areas, 500, 500)

**BELL PEPPERS:** Producers in the West Central area finished fall crop picking by early January and started spring crop planting in late January. Southwestern and East Coast growers transplanted steadily from January until mid-to-late March. Cold, gusty winds caused some leaf burn during late January with no significant damage reported. Nearly ideal weather through February and March allowed plant growth and fruit development to progress very well. Central and northern producers began transplanting during late February. Palmetto-Ruskin and southwestern growers finished planting about mid-March while East Coast growers completed planting in late March. (Southwest, 2,800, 2,800; Central, 2,550, 2,400; other, 1,150, 1,400; all areas, 6,500, 6,600)

**TOMATOES:** Palmetto-Ruskin producers began spring crop transplanting during the last week of December and finished about mid-March. Dade County planting ended in early January. Southwestern growers finished transplanting about mid-February while producers along the southeastern coast stopped planting about mid-March. Cool, dry weather provided almost ideal conditions for plant growth and fruit setting during January, February, and March, but hindered some fruit sizing. Several growers limited the first pickings to vine-ripes due to the poor market for mature greens during the winter quarter with some plantings never harvested for the mature green market. (Palmetto-Ruskin, 7,350, 7,200; Southwest, 1,750, 2,700; East Coast, 1,650, 1,700; other, 1,450, 2,300; all areas, 12,200, 13,900)

**WATERMELONS:** The southern crop is in fair to good condition. The central crop is in good to excellent condition. Recent rains have helped the northern crop. The crop is being irrigated as needed. There was no late winter or hard early spring freezes to kill the northern crop. (West, 7,900, 3,100; North, 11,400, 11,100; Central, 7,100, 6,700; South, 8,600, 8,100; all areas, 35,000, 29,000)

## UNITED STATES

The prospective area for harvest of 13 selected fresh market vegetables during the spring quarter is forecast at 222,300 acres, down 3 percent from last year. Acreage reductions for broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, cucumbers, eggplant, escarole/endive, head lettuce, and tomatoes offset increased acreage of snap beans, carrots, sweet corn, and bell peppers.

**SNAP BEANS:** Acreage for spring harvest is estimated at 24,800 acres, up 6 percent from last year.

**CABBAGE:** Intended acreage for spring harvest, estimated at 6,500 acres, is a decrease of 13 percent from last year. New Jersey's mild winter and seasonable spring weather were favorable for spring planting.

**SWEET CORN:** Intended acreage for harvest is estimated at 42,800 acres, up 4 percent from 1999. The California crop was affected by

heavy rain in February and early March which could delay harvest until later in the season.

**TOMATOES:** Intended acreage for harvest is forecast at 24,900 acres, down 7 percent from 1999. The progress of the California crop was affected by rainfall during February. However, in the past few weeks the weather has been very warm allowing the crop to progress normally.

**WATERMELONS:** Acreage intended for harvest is estimated at 60,100 acres, down 13 percent from last year. Arizona planting is on schedule. California planting was delayed by heavy rains in February. This delay combined with poor market conditions and grower losses in 1999 could reduce the spring watermelon supplies in California.

Vegetables for fresh market, prospective acreage for harvest, spring quarter  
by States, 2000 with comparisons

Selected crops and States	Usual harvest period	Spring acreage			2000 area for harvest as percent of 1999
		Harvested		For harvest 2000	
		1998	1999		
		Acres			Percent
SNAP BEANS:					
Florida	Apr-Jun	15,000	14,000	15,500	111
Georgia	Apr-Jun	6,200	7,000	8,000	114
New Jersey	Jun-Jul	1,300	1,300	1,300	100
South Carolina <sup>1/</sup>	May-Aug	1,100	1,100	--	--
Total		23,600	23,400	24,800	106
CABBAGE:					
Florida	Apr-Jun	2,300	1,600	1,000	63
Georgia	Apr-Jun	4,000	4,200	4,000	95
New Jersey	Jun-Jul	1,000	900	900	100
Texas	Apr-Jun	1,200	800	600	75
Total		8,500	7,500	6,500	87
CARROTS:					
Florida <sup>3/</sup>	Apr-Jun	1,500	--	--	--
California	Apr-Jun	25,000	23,500	25,000	106
Texas	Apr-Jun	1,300	1,700	700	41
Total		27,800	25,200	25,700	102
SWEET CORN:					
Florida	Apr-Jul	28,900	28,100	28,800	102
California	Apr-Jun	13,700	13,000	14,000	108
Total		42,600	41,100	42,800	104
CUCUMBERS:					
Florida	Jan-Jun	5,600	5,300	5,300	100
South Carolina	May-Aug	1,200	1,000	1,100	110
Texas	Apr-Jun	600	600	400	67
Total		7,400	6,900	6,800	99
EGGPLANT:					
Florida	Apr-Jun	700	600	500	83
ESCAROLE/ENDIVE:					
Florida <sup>4/</sup>	Apr-Jun	600	400	--	--
New Jersey <sup>4/</sup>	May-Aug	400	400	--	--
Total		1,000	800	--	--
BELL PEPPERS: <sup>2/</sup>					
Florida	Apr-Jun	7,300	6,500	6,600	102
Texas	Apr-Jun	300	400	500	125
Total		7,600	6,900	7,100	103
TOMATOES:					
Florida	Apr-Jul	13,100	12,200	13,200	108
Alabama <sup>1/</sup>	Jun-Jul	300	600	--	--
Arkansas <sup>1/</sup>	Jun-Aug	700	750	--	--
California	Apr-Jun	9,000	8,000	8,200	103
South Carolina	May-Jul	3,200	3,600	3,500	97
Texas <sup>1/</sup>	Apr-Jun	1,400	1,600	--	--
Total		27,700	26,750	24,900	93
WATERMELON:					
Florida	Apr-Jun	32,000	35,000	29,000	83
Alabama <sup>1/</sup>	Jun-Jul	1,600	2,100	--	--
Arizona	May-Jun	6,500	6,500	6,100	94
California	Apr-Jun	4,100	4,200	3,000	71
Texas	Apr-Jun	24,500	21,000	22,000	105
Total		68,700	68,800	60,100	87
TOTAL OF CROPS LISTED					
Florida		107,000	103,700	99,900	96
United States		215,600	207,950	199,200	96
TOTAL OF CROPS ESTIMATED					
United States <sup>5/</sup>		340,800	342,150	327,300	96

<sup>1/</sup> Seasonal estimate discontinued. Estimate to be published in January 2001 annual. <sup>2/</sup> Includes fresh market and processing. <sup>3/</sup> Estimate discontinued in 1999. <sup>4/</sup> Not published to avoid disclosure. <sup>5/</sup> Total of crops listed plus broccoli, cauliflower, celery, head lettuce, cantaloups, and honeydew melons.